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EUROPE

1. AUSTRIA: Foreign Minister's suggestions for Austrian Army-- Austrian Foreign Minister Gruber has advised US Legation Vienna that it would be a mistake for the western powers to approach the USSR, either before or after the signing of an Austrian treaty, regarding the establishment of a "preliminary" Austrian Army. Gruber suggests that a Soviet signature on a treaty should be assumed to be approval for the Austrian Government to prepare to implement all the treaty provisions, thus enabling Austria to proceed quietly with its plans for an army during the 90 days between ratification of the treaty and the withdrawal of occupation troops. The Austrian Foreign Minister feels that consultation with the USSR would involve the risk of Soviet refusal for Austrian action prior to the effective date of a treaty and that this refusal would make it difficult for the Austrians to do more than elementary military planning. Gruber is even more apprehensive lest the USSR be given an opportunity to insist that preparations for the future army be carried out under the supervision of the four-power Allied Council which, Gruber believes, would give the USSR a chance to interfere with the planning and to impede the program.

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